

port and the outgoing port on our own Canadian territory, at the city of Montreal. We shall also have the advantage of connecting with our own Intercolonial railway over which we can transport our products to the national ports of Quebec, St. John and Halifax. In addition to this, a demand is being made for the deepening of the canals to which I have just referred, to a depth of 35 feet. That project would involve an expenditure too large to give it consideration. We have at all events the remedy in our own hands in the construction of the Georgian Bay ship canal, if it is thought to be commercially feasible in the interests of the Dominion.

My right hon. friend who leads the Opposition, dealt this afternoon with the question of the transportation of our products from western Canada to our eastern ports, and with the amount of traffic that was diverted to American ports. I am free to confess that, to my mind, that is undoubtedly the strongest argument that can be advanced for undertaking the construction of the Georgian Bay ship canal. It is an undoubted fact that the grain of western Canada has been diverted to American ports to a very large extent. My hon. friend the member for Nicolet (Mr. Lamarche) gave us certain figures this afternoon, correct figures in my judgment; but although our traffic is being diverted and Buffalo seems to be the point at which the diversion takes place—it is not diverted to New York by the Erie canal, nor will it be at any future time, for the simple reason that up to the present time our neighbours to the south have not shown that energy in the development of their canals that would lead us to expect that it will be possible for them to compete with us, in any reasonable time at all events, by means of the Erie canal. As every hon. gentleman in this House probably knows, the Erie canal has only had a depth until very recently of eleven to twelve feet, and now I believe it is something like fourteen feet; therefore we have a greater canal system upon the Canadian side, and we are in a better position than our American friends to transport our wheat via canals to the seaboard. Unfortunate as it may be, the fact is, as stated by my right hon. friend this afternoon, that when our grain reaches Buffalo it is unloaded and placed, not in ships to be taken by canal, but on railway trains, and carried by the different railway companies to New York. In my humble judgment, our Canadian railways are very

blamable and should be held responsible by this Parliament for allowing that traffic to be diverted to New York in this manner, instead of carrying it to

10 p.m. Montreal and other Canadian ports. As loyal Canadians,

we cannot allow any diversion of our trade to American ports and to American railways, if we are going to build up that Canada that we all hope to see built up in the future; and to my mind that is the strongest possible reason why this Parliament should take action with regard to the Georgian Bay ship canal. I have no hesitation in saying that the railway companies of Canada have been, and are, at great fault in that they themselves allow the traffic to be diverted in this manner. The only reason for it that occurs to my mind is that they are so taxed with more profitable transport in other parts of Canada, that they have not been able to take care of that trade. Otherwise, they would not have allowed the American railways to take it away from them. This is a very serious matter, and one that well deserves consideration, not only by this House but by the Railway Commission, to see if we cannot, by some means or other, prevent our traffic being diverted to American channels.

My right hon. friend this afternoon took objection to the appointment of another commission. In his judgment we already have had commissions enough. In so far as engineering commissions are concerned, I quite agree with him. The hon. member for Wright (Mr. Devlin) quoted suggestions and recommendations made by the commission appointed in the year 1905 in respect to the deep waterways between lake Superior and Montreal. This commission dealt with the various questions that came before them, but failed to make any recommendations in respect to the Georgian Bay canal project. They went on to say that if the project were considered feasible from a commercial point of view, as well as from an engineering standpoint, they would be disposed to make a recommendation. We have had engineering reports, but we have not yet had reports as to its commercial feasibility; and I may say that the question of a commission in respect to commercial feasibility is no new matter. It was not only recommended in 1905 by that commission, but was taken up by the Department of Public Works, and if you read closely the reports of 1906, 1907 and 1908, you will find continual references to